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REPUBLICANS IN SENATE AT LAST "GOT TOGETHER"

Rallied to Support of the Postal Savings Bank
Bill and Passed It for the
Administration.

By Ernest G. Walker.

(Mail Special to The Advertiser.)

WASHINGTON, March 21.—Nearing the top of the hill. So the politicians at Washington are saying of President Taft. Perhaps their exclamations, of the sort just mentioned, are a trifle in advance of the actualities. In any event the exclamations are optimistic in the right direction.

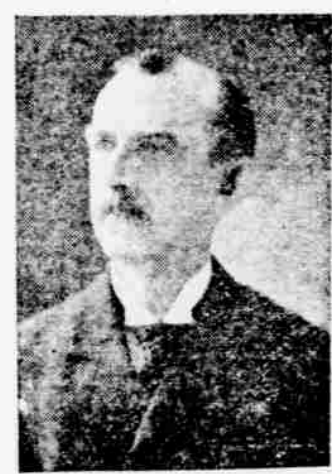
That old friend, the Postal Savings Bank Bill, is past the senate hurdles, hoist! In spite of all the high jumping phases built across its course, Old Postal Savings Bank bill cleared 'em all gloriously and went spinning over the end of the Senate course in great triumph. The Republican portion of the country is almost ringing with acclaim at the way regulars and insurgents all surged into one party camp and gave Old Postal Savings Bank Bill a unanimous vote. Nothing like it has been seen in many days. No one apparently dreamed it would be possible. Were not the insurgents guarding the pass, arrayed in full armor? La Follette and Bristow and Cummins and Doolittle and Chappin and others—were pelting for a fight and for a chance at victory. But somehow or other they were brought over. Quiet forces were at work in the interest of party harmony. It was all done in a night. Just when the psychological moment came, there was a Johnny on the spot to take advantage of it. "Republicans have long distinguished themselves from the Democrats by getting together, when it was supremely important to do so," said one little man. "Things are getting very grave. Let's show 'em that we are still Republicans of the old type."

Senator W. Murray Crane, of Massachusetts, rapidly arising as the new leader of the senate, did this. He did not care very much about Old Postal Savings Bank Bill. For that matter, neither did many other Republicans in the senate. But it was and is an administration measure and a Republican platform measure. Legislatively it occupied a strategic position, where its passage would speak coherently as to the capacity and status of the Republican party at the present juncture. Some way certainly could be found to make it acceptable to all Republicans. Why not? Senator Crane believed there was a way and he found it.

Senator Hale has been keeping hands off Old Postal Savings. It was enough for him to take care of \$1,000,000,000 worth of appropriations at the senate end of the Capitol for this session. That alone is a pretty big job for one man to handle—only something like \$100,000,000 a day for several months as legislative days go. "Let Senator Aldrich look after those other matters," said Senator Hale. "His big committee on finance has little to do this year."

But Senator Aldrich has grown weary of the lobbyists and chaps, swaying in his direction from many parts of the country. He was friendly but not enthusiastic about taking off his coat and laboring with his colleagues. He remembered the acerbities and the odors of the tariff bill campaign, which ended in factional troubles. And very quietly he shifted the burden to the quiet little man from Massachusetts.

The little man from Massachusetts, who moves around in a friendly manner, cheerful and sociable with the advance of every bill and amendment which over shows his head inside the senate, was now the man. He is methodical



Senator Crane of Massachusetts.

a humming bird and almost as rapid. He drifted to the White House of a morning and of an evening. He kept in touch with every phase of senate sentiment. He knew when the situation was critical—where there was really danger of the Republican majority in the senate being split wide through and through, so that the country could see the daylight in the breach. He never lost his temper; he never became excited. Sometimes he shook his head dolefully over the prospects, but he kept at work.

And just when nearly everybody else thought Old Postal Savings Bank Bill was about to shiver and groan upon the prostrating reefs, the little, quiet man from Massachusetts scooped her around into a clear, wide channel of deep water. For the present there is fine sailing ahead.

The Republicans of the senate have not felt as amiable or as solidly militant before this session as now. After so many factional disturbances, after all the tariff wrangling and the consequent wounds, there is a feeling of elation when all are touching elbows once again. It makes the senate Republicans feel better to see the ranks closed up in the face of the enemy.

While jubilant over the solidity with which they carried the postal savings bank bill through the senate last week, the Republicans are now earnestly addressing themselves to getting it through the house, and also to getting it into more acceptable shape. The senate debate established pretty well in the average mind that the original purpose was to make the bill a step toward the establishment of a central bank of issue. Senator Aldrich has not fully committed himself to such legislation yet, but there has been in progress for months throughout the country a campaign of education to that end.

It would mean a change of methods for the many thousands of national banks throughout the country, each of which now circulates its own notes, based upon government bonds deposited with the treasurer of the United States. There are \$700,000,000 of 2 per cents, not due and not payable till 1920, now outstanding. Virtually all of these 2 per cents are owned by national banks as basis for national bank circulation. The funds were loaned for long terms, when the tariff debt was refunded in 1900, with a view to affording the banks a safe basis for circulation. No such a form as a central bank of issue was then even thought of, except by theorists and doctrinaires.

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